

VZCZCXYZ0000  
PP RUEHWEB

DE RUEHUNV #0157/01 0991230  
ZNR UUUUU ZZH  
P 091230Z APR 09  
FM USMISSION UNVIE VIENNA  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 9288  
INFO RUEHVI/AMEMBASSY VIENNA 1337  
RHEHAAA/WHITE HOUSE WASHDC  
RUEKJCS/DOD WASHDC  
RHEBAAA/DOE WASHDC  
RUEAEPA/EPA WASHDC  
RUCPDC/NOAA WASHDC  
RUEAUSA/USDA WASHDC

UNCLAS UNVIE VIENNA 000157

SIPDIS

DEPT FOR R/PPR Helen Zoltanski, OES/SAT Hodgkins, STAS Reynolds,  
Please also pass to Special Adviser to the Under Secretary for  
Democracy and Global Affairs  
White House for OSTP, Please also pass to NSF  
USDA for Forest Service  
DOE for Office of Science  
SECSTATE PLEASE PASS USAID

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [KSCA](#) [NAS](#) [AORC](#) [PGOV](#) [AU](#)

SUBJECT: IIASA Council Accelerates Strategic Planning

-----  
SUMMARY  
-----

¶1. (U) The IIASA Council, governing body of the International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis (IIASA), met on March 27 to discuss the new strategic plan and agreed to core principles that will guide the process toward the June Council meeting. The Council reached consensus on the need for IIASA to narrow its focus to a few major global problems, increase its policy relevance, and focus on interlinkages, rather than sub-systems. New Director Detlof von Winterfeldt, who assumed his post on January 1, 2009, has nominated a writing committee that will produce a draft strategic plan by the end of April to the National Member Organizations (NMOs). NMOs will then have several weeks to review and comment on the paper and a second draft will be distributed shortly before the Council meeting on 7-9 June. End summary.

-----  
Director Seeks Streamlined Research, More Engagement  
-----

¶2. (U) In a meeting the week before the Council meeting, von Winterfeldt said that the last strategic plan, which was implemented in 2000, had mixed results. Although its objective of globalizing IIASA's membership was met, the research plan was too disparate, balkanizing the Institute and detracting from one of its core strengths, interdisciplinary systems analysis. The director wants to streamline IIASA's 12 programs and four special projects into 3-5 core clusters that conduct research on interconnected global problems.

¶3. (U) Another priority is increasing engagement with NMOs and establishing a dialogue to make IIASA more responsive to member state needs. Von Winterfeldt wants to establish links within government agencies to ensure that IIASA's work has policy impact. He is preparing customized brochures for each NMO summarizing how IIASA has benefitted individual states. He praised his predecessor Leen Hoordijk for globalizing IIASA's membership, calling it his greatest legacy. He noted that Estonia had resigned its membership, but Malaysia was close to joining, and the Institute continued to pursue the membership of the U.K. and France.

-----  
Scientists Call for "Solution-Oriented" Programs  
-----

¶4. (U) Arild Underdal of Norway, Chairman of the Scientific Advisory Council (SAC) presented the views of the SAC on the strategic plan. The SAC agreed that IIASA needed a more focused research agenda, with better integration of programs, and with science at the core of the mission. The SAC proposed increasing IIASA's policy relevance by making its programs "science-based and solution-oriented" and by providing menus of options for policy makers. IIASA's strategic plan should build on its strengths, which the SAC identified as science-based modeling and analysis, focus on global problems, integrated interdisciplinary assessments, policy independence, and networks and collaboration.

-----  
Member Organizations Weigh In  
-----

¶5. (U) Representatives from 15 National Member Organizations (NMOs) were present (Austria, China, Egypt, Finland, India, the Netherlands, Norway, Pakistan, Poland, Republic of Korea, Russia, South Africa, Sweden, Ukraine, and the United States), and nearly every country contributed to the discussion. The South African representative emphasized that the first task should be refining IIASA's identity, especially in light of the expanded membership. Furthermore, capacity-building should be integrated into IIASA programs rather than added as an afterthought. Pakistan shared this view. The U.S. said the only way to attract NMO interest was through a broad global agenda. Pakistan agreed, adding that the proposed holistic approach that linked climate change, food, water, and energy was very fruitful. The U.S. NMO also said that "negotiation" should be added to the list of core strengths, an allusion to the Processes of International Negotiation (PIN) program, and India said that the "science" in science-based modeling should include social science. Russia recommended an influx of new brains and new ideas, which should be facilitated by a mandatory rotation of IIASA staff, a proposal supported by Sweden, which also called for integrating gender equality into all IIASA programs.

-----  
Emerging Consensus on Strategic Plan  
-----

¶6. (U) After discussions, von Winterfeldt presented a list of principles to guide the writing team in the preparation of the first draft of the strategic plan. This consensus included:

- focus on 3-4 major global problems
- increase policy relevance
- conduct global research with local collaboration
- focus on interlinkages, not sub-systems
- develop multiple capacities, including systems integration, innovation, and outreach
- strengthen education and capacity building.

The writing team will produce a draft strategic plan for review by the end of April. NMOs will then have several weeks to submit comments and a second draft will be distributed shortly before the next Council meeting on June 7-9.

-----  
COMMENT  
-----

¶7. (U) New director Detlof Von Winterfeldt's clear vision of IIASA's future orientation is well-articulated and enjoys broad support both within IIASA and among the national member organizations. His experience in development in the U.S. university system should help make IIASA more responsive to member organizations. His proposals to streamline and focus IIASA's research program will help raise awareness and increase the impact of the Institute's work. We particularly welcome the recognition of the need to increase policy relevance by engaging directly with relevant government agencies. Such dialog is central to the long-term health of IIASA, particularly as governments begin to look more closely at the costs and benefits of IIASA membership in light of the economic downturn. The success of the strategic plan will depend in large part on the extent to which IIASA can carve a niche for itself in a crowded policy advisory community, and on this score

we are optimistic, because IIASA's comparative advantage remains the quality and diversity of its scientific staff, which lend it a unique capacity to conduct high-quality, interdisciplinary systems analysis. End comment.

SCHULTE